

REMARKS

Claims 1-33 are pending herein.

By this Amendment, claim 8 is amended to cure an informality. Thus, no new matter is added by this Amendment.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant notes with appreciation that claims 22-33 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of their respective base claim and any intervening claims.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,170,007 (hereinafter "Venkatraman") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,651,006 (hereinafter "Fujino"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1, 8, 15 and 17 recite, in part, that the selected terminal transmits a request to the other interconnected terminals to obtain information on the other interconnected terminals, the other interconnected terminals forward to the selected terminal the information on the other interconnected terminals in response to the request, and the selected terminal then forwards to the controller the information from the other interconnected terminals and information on the selected terminal.

Independent claim 11 recites, in part, requesting means for (1) requesting the other terminals to obtain information on the other terminals, wherein the other terminals forward to the terminal the information on the other terminals in response to the request, and (2) for forwarding the obtained information on the other terminals to the terminal.

The Office Action acknowledges that Venkatraman does not teach the claimed features of at least two of the terminals each adapted to obtain information on the other terminals therefrom, requesting means for requesting the selected terminal to transmit, to the

controller, information on all the interconnected terminals; wherein the selected terminal transmits a request to the other interconnected terminal to obtain the information on the other terminals, receives the information from the other terminals, and forwards to the controller the information from the other terminals and information on the selected terminal. However, at page 3 of the Office Action, the Patent Office references col. 5, line 34 to col. 6, line 44 and col. 7, lines 1-53 of Fujino and asserts that Fujino teaches these claimed features.

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Office Action's interpretation of Fujino. Specifically, neither Venkatraman nor Fujino teach or suggest at least the feature including a request to other terminals to obtain information on the other terminals, wherein the other terminals forward to the selected terminal the information on the other terminals in response to the request, as recited in independent claims 1, 8, 11, 15 and 17. More specifically, Venkatraman and/or Fujino fail to teach or suggest that the selected terminal transmits a request to the other interconnected terminals to obtain the information on the other interconnected terminals, the other interconnected terminals forward to the selected terminal the information on the other interconnected terminals in response to the request, and to forward the information from the other interconnected terminals, as recited in claims 1, 8, 11, 15 and 17.

Fujino cannot teach or suggest these features. In particular, as acknowledged by the Patent Office, the system disclosed in Fujino is a hierarchical communication network management system. The hierarchical communication network management system shown in Fig. 2 has logical relationship of agents, sub-managers and an integration manager. See col. 6, lines 5-6 of Fujino. It appears that the Patent Office has considered that the sub-manager corresponds to a selected terminal recited in claim 1. However, the sub-manager is only used for managing and controlling the managing objects under the management of agents, and is

not one of a plurality of agents or terminals interconnected via a network, as required by each of claims 1, 8, 11, 15 and 17. See col. 5, line 52-55 of Fujino.

Furthermore, the sub-manager in Fujino is fixed or set as the manager for managing and controlling the managing objects. Namely, the sub-manager is not the selected terminal based on user's designation, as recited in claims 1, 8, 15 and 17.

Accordingly, the sub-manager in Fujino just works as a server computer such as described in "Description of Related Art" of the present specification. Thus, the hierarchical network system including the sub-manager cannot achieve the object of the presently claimed invention of obtaining information on the terminals efficiently without using such a server computer. See page 2 of the specification.

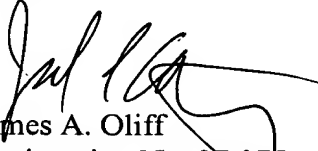
For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that Venkatraman and Fujino, whether taken singularly or in combination, would not have led one of ordinary skill in the art to the invention of independent claims 1, 8, 11, 15 and 17 or any of the claims dependent therefrom. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are thus respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-33 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Joel S. Armstrong
Registration No. 36,430

Linda M. Saltiel
Registration No. 51,122

JAO:JSA:LMS/hs

Date: August 25, 2004

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>
